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HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

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November 29, 1990

Secretary of State James Baker
Department of State
Washington, DC

United States Department of State
Office of FOI, Privacy, & Classification Review
Review Authority: IZENBERG, IVAN
Date: 07/22/94
Case ID: 9000158

Dear Secretary Baker:

We deeply regret and strongly protest the decision by the United States to invite Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen to Washington, DC following the United Nations Security Council meeting. The invitation, which in effect ends the U.S. ban on high-level contacts with China, comes at a time when repression in the People's Republic of China is not lessening but, in fact, seems to be intensifying.

A growing number of prominent intellectuals and leading supporters of last year's democracy movement are reportedly being charged with serious offenses, including in some cases, charges that could result in the death penalty. Further details on these cases and others of urgent concern to Asia Watch can be found in the attached material.

We believe it is of the utmost importance that the administration publicly voice its concern about human rights in China at the time of your meeting with Foreign Minister Qian Qichen in Washington. Only by making public U.S. concerns regarding human rights can the administration ensure that the Chinese government -- and most importantly, the Chinese people -- understand that specific improvements in human rights will be a condition of any further contacts or relaxation of sanctions.

First, we urge you to publicly condemn the decision to charge Wang Juntao and Chen Ziming with counterrevolution, and to seek the lifting of this charge and their prompt release.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Second, we ask you to raise the twenty-three urgent cases described in the attached material and publicly appeal for their release, as well as the release of thousands of others who have been jailed due to their peaceful activities in the democracy movement.

In the year and a half since the June 1989 crackdown, the Chinese authorities have arrested thousands of people, usually without naming them. Though the government claims to have released some 881 pro-democracy prisoners, it has only provided the names of a handful and this number is impossible to verify. We urge you to publicly request that the names of all those detained or released be published.

Finally, we recommend that you impress upon the Chinese authorities the necessity of opening any trials of pro-democracy activists to international scrutiny, both to ensure compliance with international fair trial standards and to prevent the punishment of individuals for the peaceful expression of their views.

Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Aryeh Neier
Executive Director